

for the troops, harness and saddles for the cavalry and horse-drawn artillery, both of which were prominent services in World War I.

Soon it was apparent to the Canadian public that there was a dangerous shortage of machine guns, the weapon which was shortly to become the deciding factor on the battlefields. My husband, at his personal expense, equipped what became known as the Eaton Machine Gun Battery.

When the Patriotic Fund was set up, he served on the organizing committee and put his energy and enthusiasm into the drive. Although he disliked public speaking, he made many appeals for funds from platforms, and took an active part in canvassing the business community.

Some months later he was asked if he would be willing to receive a title as recognition for his contribution to the war effort. This first approach was a complete surprise to us both, but after some discussion we agreed that the award was not only to Jack but also to the many people in the Store and his associates who had given him such great assistance in these voluntary enterprises, and that he must certainly accept.

In 1915 the name of John Craig Eaton appeared in the honours list, and he was made a Knight Bachelor. In the autumn of that year we received a command to attend an investiture by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, Governor-General of Canada, at Rideau Hall, Ottawa.

Naturally I was very excited. I had been presented to the Duke and Duchess some time before and had attended many of the functions arranged for them, but I had never been present at an investiture, and never involved so intimately in an important occasion. To move among Royalty always gives me a special thrill, and so I was in a state of exalted flutter as I prepared to accompany my husband to Ottawa.

The great day arrived. Those who were to be decorated were taken aside beforehand and briefed by one of the aides. It was a wonderful moment for me when Jack's

name was called. He walked up, knelt in front of the Duke of Connaught who touched him on each shoulder with his sword and uttered the ancient command beginning, "Arise, Sir Knight . . ." I felt shivers up and down my spine, and I could hardly restrain my tears—but they were tears of pride and happiness.

We were invited to remain for luncheon following the ceremony, and as is so often the case in the Royal Family, this became a very pleasant family party. In the dining-room three large round tables were laid; the Duke presided at the first, the Princess Patricia at the centre table, and the Duchess at the third. We stood for a military grace. My husband sat beside the Princess, and I had my place at the Duchess's table. It was always a rule in Royal circles—and I believe it still obtains in diplomatic society—that a meal must be over in an hour; when one lays down knife and fork even for a minute, there is the constant risk of having the footman whisk the plate away. A guest has to be on the alert or he would leave the table hungry!

After the sweet came the dessert of fruit and it was at this luncheon that I learned, from the example of the Duchess and the Princess, how to eat a fine ripe peach with a spoon. They used a knife to cut the fruit open, removed the pit with knife and fork, and then picked up the dessert spoon and ate the two halves from the skin, in the same way as melon is eaten. This is now one of my mealtime habits, and one doesn't have the messy business of peeling the fruit.

When luncheon was finished, all the women guests turned at the door and curtsied to Their Royal Highnesses, and the men bowed. After coffee in the drawing-room the exciting event was over and the guests went their various ways—my husband and I to the private car, *Eatonia*, and then home to Toronto. On that occasion the welcome was festive indeed. Our servants were beaming, and never missed an opportunity to address "Sir John" and to hail me as "My Lady". The children—and we now had four

are two little scraps of history which I find interesting. At luncheon in the Chateau Frontenac, Quebec, on our way home, we found "the first intimation in a public institution of the Food Controller's suggestions being put into effect—a little card attached to the menu explaining: 'No beef or bacon Tuesdays or Fridays, and only once any other day.'"

And then the following day, after taking the ferry to Point Levis in order to board the *Eatonia*, which waited for us on the south side of the river, we saw the new span of the Quebec bridge ready to be put in place and waiting for high tide. This is what I wrote in my diary: "Owing to the unfortunate circumstances connected with this span twice before, great secrecy is being used this time as to the actual time of placing the new one, for they do not want a crowd in case the third attempt should fail." As we all know, that new span slipped into place perfectly and so far as I know has been serving ever since. What pleased me was the fact that the final, successful feat was achieved by Canadian engineers; on the first two tries the steel span had been delivered by U.S. companies.

Many Canadians remember, with a shudder, the terrible disaster of the Halifax explosion which took place on December 6, 1917. Two ships, one of them loaded with TNT, rammed in Halifax harbour, and the resulting chaos in the city, and the fires, the loss of life, and suffering of the injured, were to go down in history as one of our country's most tragic events.

At once my husband organized a small hand-picked group, including our two trained nurses from *Ardwold*, and the chief pharmacist from the Store, had the *Eatonia* and a freight car loaded with blankets, clothing, food, medical supplies, and went as quickly as possible to Halifax. They remained there for nearly a week, and because of the speed of the expedition were able to offer real help.

In that last year of the war I remained at home and

took care of my children—the four boys who ranged from teen-aged Timothy to Gilbert, an active toddler. All the doctors we knew, and our dentists too, were on overseas service—and just to keep our household healthy and continue to make a reasonably serene home life for my husband was task enough. From time to time there was the sorrowful duty of calling at the house of a friend or relative, bereaved overnight by the telegraphed message from Ottawa, "killed in action".

Gen. Sir Sam Hughes (he had been knighted and decorated a few years before), whose home was in Lindsay near my village of Omemee, had invited me to be patroness of the 109th Regiment, raised initially in that district. On one occasion I went to Lindsay to present the colours; with me were my husband, who was an Honorary Colonel, and Dr. Herbert Bruce, back on leave from his medical command at the front. The Regiment marched past, and Sir John took the salute, and I remember feeling very proud of my escort as I stood there on the dais between my husband and Dr. Bruce. Later the 109th presented me with a plaque bearing the regimental crest. When the war was over the colours of the 109th were deposited in my old church, the Wesleyan Methodist, in Omemee. Since those days that regiment, along with many others which gave distinguished service to Canada, has lost its identity in the reorganization of Army units, and I for one am sorry to see the disappearance of the old familiar names and traditions.

When the Armistice finally came, all of us, myself included, found it difficult to grasp. My youngest son, born in wartime, kept asking me, "Is there going to be no more wars, Mummie?" Perhaps I was rash enough, or hopeful enough, to say, "No, Gilbert—no more wars!"

Anyway the release of nerve tension on that first or "false" Armistice Day, a few days before the real truce was signed, was remarkable to see. Everywhere in the streets of Toronto the people went mad with joy; church bells

and saying how good it was to be back home, singing for Canadians again. Both of us rejoiced when the Committee announced that the sum raised was the largest ever realized from a single event.

That occasion was unique in my life, and I still experience a sense of surprised delight when I recall it. The baskets and bouquets of flowers which the debutante ushers brought up to the footlights for me were almost beyond counting; no one had forewarned me that Toronto people could be so generous to one of their own amateurs!

My husband presented me with several mementoes which I still have and cherish. As a good luck gift he gave me a platinum bracelet on which the first bar of my first song was marked out in black enamel and diamonds. I wore it that night, with my gown of blue and silver brocade and drapery of silver lace. Some weeks before the concert he had ordered a diamond tiara in the shape of maple leaves. Unfortunately the points of the design were too sharp against my head, so for the actual event I wore another tiara. The beautiful maple leaves, solidly studded with diamonds and just as exquisitely wrought on the backs, were later fashioned into a brooch, and this I have worn almost constantly ever since. It pleases me, and it would have pleased Jack, to know that this brooch, made to order for me in our own Eaton's jewellery workshop, has been admired and commented upon by both H.M. Queen Mary and H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

After the experience in Massey Hall, I had confidence in holding my own with an audience, and I enjoyed filling several other concert engagements. I sang with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra during Mr. Luigi Von Kunits' leadership; it was a pleasure to work with such a fine musician and gentleman. Later I went to Regina to sing with the orchestra there. Mr. Webster, our Mail Order Manager in Regina, had initiated that plan, but alas, by the time I could keep my promise, he had died. Miss Newlands, daughter of the Lieutenant-Governor of Saskatchewan,

wrote to me and asked if I would be their guest at Government House during my visit. I tried to excuse myself, thinking I would be a nuisance, for on any day before a concert I refrained from food and drank only orange juice, to keep my voice clear, and also I had to rest a good deal. However, Miss Newlands overcame all my excuses and when I arrived at the station I was met by one of the aides and a gallant young constable of the R.C.M.P. My accompanist, Mlle. Germaine Sanderson, and I enjoyed the quiet hospitality of Hon. H. W. Newlands and his daughter. My Regina program consisted of an aria with the orchestra, "The Lost Chord" with pipe organ and orchestra, and a group of songs with the piano. Again, as with the Toronto Symphony, I had that feeling of strength and inspiration which singing with a well-conducted orchestra seems to bring. One is not a solitary performer, one is simply part of the whole, and there is the reassuring sensation that the orchestra is supporting and sustaining one throughout.

Edward Johnson became the good friend of every member of our family. When he first visited us Florence Mary was just five months old, and a rather dignified, dainty person, even at that age. Our guest used to spend a great deal of time just watching her in her play-pen, handing her a toy from time to time, and musing on what went on in that little fair head. They continued to be wonderful friends as she grew up, and now it is her small daughter who is fascinated by Dr. Edward Johnson, and who gives him all her attention when he drops in for a chat with her parents.

When Sir John and I accompanied him on his first Ontario concert tour, via the *Eaton* private car, we both found it a delightful experience to have a much-travelled person with us, interested in everything that interested us, and most anxious to acquire a thorough knowledge of Canada after his long absence in Europe. Our friendship

became firmly rooted, and soon it was routine for Edward to stay with us whenever he was in Toronto for a few days. He spent a month at *Kawandag*, seriously rehearsing for his next season's opera and concert tour; after the hours at the piano he became a boy again, enjoying the golf, swimming and boating excursions with the rest of us. Fiorenza, his daughter (now Mrs. George Drew) with her nurse, Tatta, stayed with us for a summer at *Kawandag* while her father was filling special engagements. And so the old, strong threads of friendship persist. Whenever circumstances permit, Edward and I are together again, re-living those days when the company was at its full quota, and we were all still young and venturesome.

Edward Johnson is a remarkable person. He has solid convictions, and when his mind is made up to action it is always because he has considered every angle of the matter and has selected the course that is right. He has never been influenced by the "mob" aspect at any time, and he never compromises his judgment in the interests of mass popularity. He continually surprises me by his grasp of political developments, here or in the world arena. He is loyalty itself, and one of the merriest of companions. He has stimulated and encouraged me when life was difficult and the way ahead looked dark indeed; he continues to be an inspiration and joy.

CHAPTER IX

OUR FIRST trip abroad after the 1914-1918 war was a delightful one, and all the details remain clearly in my mind because that was to be the last time my husband would be with me in Europe. We had the four boys with us—and indeed one of the reasons for that journey was to engage a tutor to supervise their studies and activities after school hours. We found a young man of exceptional character and ability, a Cambridge graduate, and for some years he was to be an important member of our household. (One of his most successful ventures was to produce a weekly "newspaper" at *Kawandag*, and to encourage his four charges to contribute, edit, typewrite and distribute it. I still have a file of those papers and they are amusing reading, even for a fond mother!) On that trip, too, we engaged a charming young Swiss girl as governess.

In London Jack and I decided to take a house close to Caenwood Park and this became a real haven to return to after our visits to the Continent. Most of the time the boys remained at that headquarters, with Miss Freeze, the trained nurse who had been with us for nearly ten years. My cousin, David A. Keys, was then doing work on the atom at Cambridge under the direction of the famous Sir Ernest Rutherford. Often David would be our guest in London, and when we decided to take the whole family on a trip to Switzerland we persuaded him to join us.

When we left England, one of our friends commented, "The Court now moves to Switzerland." It was quite a move, involving four boys, a nurse, my maid and Sir John's

valet, Arthur Morris, cousin David, and our two selves. But in those days the business of railway reservations, channel crossing, tickets straight through from London to Lucerne, was fairly simple. We moved up to St. Moritz, and there we added Arthur Blight and his wife, who had been visiting Italy, to our party. It was a leisurely holiday for us all; the tourist season was fairly well over, and the first autumn colouring had appeared on the mountains, to be reflected like rich jewels in the many small lakes. There were unfamiliar insects buzzing about, and one afternoon Mr. Blight was bitten on the wrist. The usual remedies were applied, but in the middle of the night his wife wakened us and we saw that his arm had swollen alarmingly and angry red lines were climbing up above the elbow. Miss Freeze recognized it at once as blood poisoning. With not a minute to lose she sterilized a razor blade, and after painting the spot with iodine made an incision an inch long. The poison gushed out. In the morning, after she had kept dressings carefully in place, she drove Mr. Blight into town to see a doctor. He did very little, except say, "Young lady, you have saved this man's life with your prompt attention."

On our return to London we stayed at the Ritz. Charlie Chaplin, then at the height of his career, was a fellow-guest, and Jack and I saw him in the foyer, surrounded by autograph hunters. When we reached our suite and told the children, one of them lamented loudly, "Wouldn't it just be Mummie and Daddy who'd see him, and they don't care at all!" We were to encounter him again that evening, at a performance of the Russian ballet. Just before the curtain went up for the second scene, Diaghilev, seated at the centre of the first gallery, stood up and shouted, "Who's here? Charlie Chap-a-lin he's here! Three cheers for your Charlie!" The audience burst into a rousing cheer, and Mr. Chaplin modestly stood up and bowed his thanks.

By the time we were departing on the *Empress of Scotland* at Southampton, the inevitable had happened—David

A. Keys had decided to take our wonderful Miss Freeze away from us. It was planned that he would return to Canada on his Christmas vacation, and the wedding would be at *Ardwold*. So all of us were involved in a happy bustle and hustle in the next few weeks. The bride's family, some of whom Jack and I had met during our wartime camping holiday, came up from Doaktown, N.B., and stayed with us. There were the usual ushers and bridesmaids, but my eyes were dotingly on the ring-bearer, our Gilbert, and the flower-girl, Florence Mary. During the ceremony she amused herself by stepping back and forth over "Freezie's" train; afterwards, going down the aisle, scattering her rose petals, she stopped to say hello to all the friends. I sang the wedding music, and Sir Joseph Flavelle, who had done some helpful kindnesses for the bride's sister before her death, presided as toastmaster. My husband sent the young couple to Montreal in the *Eaton*, and they sailed for England. Today Dr. Keys is well known in Canada as the head of the Government's Chalk River atomic research development.

That was our last important, happy occasion as a complete family group. I suppose we celebrated New Year's, went calling and received visitors as usual, and no doubt Jack and I discussed plans for our farm near King City, and the improvements to be made there in the following spring. But these normal affairs have faded from my mind, because of the event which was so swiftly to overtake us all.

As a director of the Canadian Pacific Railway, my husband attended the monthly meetings in Montreal regularly. In January, 1922, he went as usual. A couple of days later I received a message from Grant Hall, C.P.R. Vice-President, that Sir John appeared to have a severe attack of 'flu. Mr. Hall said he would accompany him home on the night train. Often I used to go to meet Jack at the station, and, though he always protested my coming down town at 7.30 a.m., he was nevertheless appreciative. This

time some instinct warned me that I had better wait at home and prepare to receive a sick man. Dr. William Goldie came up at once in answer to my telephone call, and I have never ceased to be grateful to him for telling me the truth. He diagnosed Jack's condition as pneumonia, and he said, "It is serious."

Then began the long, losing battle. My husband was ill for seven weeks, and for one who had always been so active and filled with energy, it was an agony just to remain in bed. There were signs of improvement from time to time, and for a day or so everyone's face would brighten with fresh hope. Gilbert slept in my room, and in the early morning he'd say to me, "I'll go and see how Daddy is." I would ask him to take my love, and then he'd return with the message, "Daddy sends you his love, and a kiss, and says he had a comfortable night." Nothing cheered the patient so much as a visit from the two youngest, Gilbert and little Florence Mary, and the doctors had permitted him this pleasure as soon as the lungs had cleared.

Dr. Goldie and Dr. Duncan Graham left nothing undone. They were our good friends as well as our medical advisers. With them, some time before, my husband had organized the Sir John and Lady Eaton Chair of Medicine at the University of Toronto; they were men in whom he had the highest confidence. It was at their suggestion that we agreed to consultations, and two specialists from Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, were called in. They confirmed our doctors' diagnosis and treatment, and stated they could add nothing.

My husband, though I knew he was impatient with himself and his confinement to bed, never once complained. He was considerate of nurses and doctors and grateful to anyone who served him in any way. His faithful valet and his chauffeur took alternate hours of duty with the nurses. His mother visited him every day. When the end came she sat with me (bless her!), and her great sorrow was that Jack should have gone and not herself. "He was so

needed by so many," she said, "and lived such a useful, unselfish life, while here I am, of no use to anyone. Why couldn't it have been me?"

Gilbert seemed to feel I was his particular care. While I tried to rest he occupied himself quietly in my sitting-room, looking in from time to time to see if I slept. If I was awake, he would come in and ask, "Are you all right, Mummie?" He got hold of a piece of writing paper, scribbled on it for some time, then went over to the fireplace, dropped it in the flames and watched the smoke go up. He turned to us and said, "I was just sending a note to God, to tell Him that Daddy is on his way to heaven."

My brother, Arthur, had stayed with us at *Ardwold* during the final weeks of the vigil. He was a great comfort to me, as he saw the many callers when I could not leave my husband's bedside, and his kindness and support to the older boys was wonderful indeed. For lads in their teens the death of a much-loved father is a staggering blow. But our boys were brave too; they did what was asked of them like men.

As for me, while I was conscious of all the kindness and sympathy that flowed in from great and small, all over the world, inwardly I felt like a stone. It was an ordeal to see even my closest friends. I wished I could have rushed away into the woods and hidden like a suffering animal.

But no one can run away from either life or death. I had my children to love and care for, and I was their sole guardian; there were legal matters to be settled, and so, through the time-tried therapy of new responsibilities, I was compelled to work my way back to normal. It wasn't easy then, and sometimes still I have to do that which is not easy, but thank God, I learned in those weeks of sorrow to stand my ground and face up to whatever problems life presented to me.

The expansion of the Company was to occupy a major portion of my waking hours during the years that fol-

lowed. I had been a member of the Board of Directors for some time before my husband's death, and I remember very well how his long-expressed desire to have me associated with him in the business was actually fulfilled. Florence Mary was still a little baby, I recall, and for that reason alone I felt I had a good argument against becoming involved. However, Jack refused to let the matter drop and mentioned his idea to some of the Board members. One day, out of the blue, while I was attending a women's luncheon at a friend's home, I received an urgent telephone message to return to *Ardwold* as soon as possible. When I got home I found four Directors in conference with my husband in the billiard room. One of them acted as spokesman for the group and said, "Lady Eaton, we are here to ask you to become a Director of the Company. We are delighted that Sir John has thought of this development, and we insist that you accept the position." I was not entirely taken by surprise, because Jack and I had often discussed the idea, but I was a little dismayed by the suddenness of the attack. After taking a few moments to recover my breath I replied, "Very well, Gentlemen, if that is your wish—and I know it is my husband's—I will accept the position on one condition: that I shall always be treated as just another person on the Board and not as a woman. If I make any suggestion that such-and-such should be done, it will be accepted only on its merits and not because I happened to be the one to put forward the idea." They agreed, and I must say that in all my period of service on the Board there was never any deviation from that ruling.

The Board of Directors met every Tuesday, and at all times except when I was a thousand miles away or more, I never missed a meeting. But for me, Tuesday came a little too close to Sunday, when I generally took complete charge of my family. Our Sunday routine was church in the morning, Sunday School for the children in the afternoon, walks or drives afterwards, supper and

bed. Occasionally I used to think that whoever wrote that hymn, "O Day of Rest and Gladness" must have been a practical joker, for the Sabbath had for years been one of my busiest days of the week.

After Jack's death I was feeling far from well, and my physician insisted that, in order to do my best for both the family and the Company, I must spend Monday in bed. This became my habit for several years, and by following this simple, sensible advice I was able to carry on in both spheres.

As an Eaton's Director, I was largely interested in Company-and-employee relations, and in improvement of employee welfare and benefits. I became an active inspector of all Company buildings, in Toronto and elsewhere. As Jack's wife, I had been thoroughly imbued with the Eaton tradition. Throughout our life together he had constantly discussed business matters with me and quite frequently if he sensed that I thought poorly of a certain plan he would withhold final decision on it.

The question of employees' hours of work and holidays was always important to us both. After the 1914-1918 war, when Eaton's men had established such a magnificent record in the fighting Services, Sir John felt that something special should be done for those who came back. I know that the men themselves did not expect it; so often on their return to their jobs they would call at the President's office and thank him for the continuation of their wages while they had been away, and for the boxes of comforts sent to them regularly from the Store each week. Nevertheless my husband's mind was made up. At a big banquet held in Toronto each returned man was given an engraved commemorative medal in the form of a watch fob; and some months later Sir John inaugurated the "all-day Saturday off" policy during the summer months. Thus the five-day week which he and his father used to discuss so many years before became a fact. This was another case of Company leadership, for a good many years were to

pass before the short work week was generally adopted in Canadian business and industry.

My husband's other great goal was that the public should be served well and courteously, and to that end he realized how essential it was to have a smooth operation at all levels of the business. Sir John, I believe, spent more time on the floors of the Store than he did in his office. To know and understand the customers and the services offered to them was his constant concern.

On one of my first visits to Winnipeg after my husband's death, I made a morning tour of all the Mail Order buildings with Mr. H. M. Tucker, the head of Eaton's in that city. When we returned to his office, I looked at him and said, "Mr. Tucker, that was just useless." He asked what I meant. "Well," I said, "our people were looking for some friendly contact with us, and neither of us gave it to them. Neither one of us smiled." His reply was, "But I don't smile readily." And to that, I said, "You'll have to learn, and we're both going to do better this afternoon." After lunch we continued our tour, going this time through the Store, and I'm glad to record that Mr. Tucker smiled and I smiled and the employees smiled too. I am positive our afternoon's activities netted infinitely better results than the morning's.

One of my special undertakings as a Director had to do with our restaurant services. To tell that story I have to go back to my early months of marriage, when I would drop in at Mr. Timothy Eaton's office and sometimes stay for lunch with him. His meal was prepared in a little corner of the basement where a couple of small tables stood behind a screen. An old-time electric grill, as heavy as lead as I recall, was part of the equipment, and there his maid, Sarah, cooked Mr. Eaton's steak and made his pot of tea. That was the first attempt at the preparation and serving of meals in the Store.

Luncheon downtown gradually became more popular

with businessmen as the city grew and they found the practice of going home at noon too time-consuming. Eaton's services expanded slowly, with a Grill Room, and later a cafeteria, off which was a private dining-room where the Directors lunched. All these places were clean and dull; there was no attempt at interesting decoration, and the dishes were of railway-station type.

I began to dream of something better. Toronto badly needed a new, good restaurant, and I was groping toward the kind that would attract women as well as businessmen. Other parts of the Store were constantly being modernized, carefully equipped and stocked; lovely things from the world around came to our various departments; we had fashions from the best designers in Paris—but we still had a commonplace restaurant. On trips to New York and abroad I did some serious scouting. In London I was invited to have luncheon in the Directors' dining-room of one of the big department stores. It was a beautiful room in the classic style: Chippendale furniture, fine Oriental rugs and brocade curtains. The table appointments were of the best; in fact, here was a dining-room worthy of a fine home. With a shock I realized I could never ask this group of men to have lunch in our restaurant in Toronto!

On my return I presented my case to the Eaton Directors. I knew that what I wanted wouldn't be a cheap venture, but I felt strongly that it would be a profitable investment in the end. Alas, my suggestion was turned down; the plan was too costly, I was told, and actually wasn't "a business proposition". I said I was willing to accept the decision, but then added, "Now I would like to ask a favour. I want you to close down the restaurant we have, for I am ashamed of it."

That afternoon the President, Mr. R. Y. Eaton (Jack's cousin), came to *Ardwold* to reopen the subject, on the advice of the other Directors who had continued to discuss the matter after the morning's meeting. I was reluctant to go along with this rather sudden change of thinking—

it *could* happen that my dream would turn into a white elephant!—but after two hours' intensive discussion I agreed to move ahead on the plan of designing a new restaurant service for the Toronto store. Mr. Charles Boothe and I comprised the committee, and promptly next morning we had our first meeting. I outlined the scheme to him, and emphasized that our restaurant would be utterly different from anything ever before undertaken by the Company, or for that matter in Toronto. He asked me how I proposed to accomplish this. I had my answer ready: "I'm going to try to get Violet Ryley."

To explain how I knew the remarkable qualities of Miss Ryley, I must again delve back into the past—to the year 1909, when we were still in our Walmer Road home. With the many contacts which Jack and I made in our travels, with friends new and old constantly coming for dinner or week-ends, and with two children in the family, our house was a busy place. We kept a staff of three servants, but the complications of three half-days off per week, and separate arrangements over each Sunday were proving a little more than I could cope with. I was resolved that some solution must be found, for I was determined never to say to my husband, "We can't have anyone in for dinner to-night because it's Cook's day off."

So I went to Miss Laird, then Principal of the Lillian Massey school of Household Science at the University, and put my problem before her. "Do you think I could make my staff interchangeable?" I asked her. "Could I find someone to teach cooking and service to all three?" Miss Laird answered promptly, "I'd like you to see Violet Ryley, one of our senior students. She has to get into practical work now, for her last year's credits, and you might find she would suit you."

Thus began my first acquaintance with scientific house-keeping, especially in the departments of cooking and serving, and organization of duties. Miss Ryley came to my

house twice a week for three months. The servants enjoyed this expert coaching, and my dilemma as a harassed hostess vanished without a trace. And in Violet Ryley I had found a lifelong friend.

At the time Mr. Boothe and I were laying our plans for the new restaurant, Miss Ryley was taking a rest after a strenuous postwar job as chief dietitian for military hospitals from coast to coast. Prior to that she had inaugurated the dining-room services at Hart House. With this experience, supported by her excellent training and her own organizing talent and good taste in everything, she was most definitely the person we needed as head of our new restaurant.

Mr. Boothe and I met Miss Ryley and won her immediate interest. We hastened to the next Board meeting with our report, and it was unanimously agreed that we could engage Miss Ryley. From that time forward she worked with us, preparing lists of requirements for kitchens and restaurant, consulting with René Cera, the Paris-trained architect who had joined the Eaton organization some time before. He drew the plans for this huge new restaurant floor remodelled at the top of the main Store. For long hours together Miss Ryley and I were immersed in the selection of linen, china, silver, waitresses' uniforms; we had frequent meetings with Mr. Boothe and the architect, and never was I associated with a more enterprising, or stimulating, or harmonious group of people.

The Georgian Room, the name we had chosen because it so well suited the dignity of the first decorative scheme, opened in 1923. People close to the food industry in Canada have often stated that it revolutionized restaurant menus and service everywhere. Certainly it set a new, a quite different standard, and my cherished dreams were realized. The Georgian Room has always been one of the most popular luncheon places in Toronto. Mr. Boothe once asked Miss Ryley if the long queue waiting in the

foyer for tables didn't worry her. "No, Mr. Boothe. I'd be worried if there was no queue."

Her capacity to organize, train and hold a staff was outstanding. Many of our Georgian Room waitresses have been with us for years. One of them who just recently retired on pension was none other than Sarah, who used to prepare Mr. Timothy Eaton's lunch for him in the basement corner. She is a dear friend of all the family. A few years ago when Gilbert (down on a visit from Winnipeg) and I were shown to her table in the Georgian Room, Sarah came up to us with a warm smile, and taking one look at my big son she said, "Well, Mr. Gilbert! I don't know whether to shake your hand or tie your napkin around your neck." And Gilbert replied, "I'd like you to do both, Sarah."

Violet Ryley, like all the really busy people, always found time to respond to any call for help. Years before, I had sent out an appeal to her, after one had come to me from Rev. Peter Bryce, the beloved minister in Toronto's Earls court district. He had felt the need of giving the women of that locality some training in nutrition and low-cost family meals. Miss Ryley entered into the project with her usual zest and efficiency, and together we set up a three-gas-ring cooking school in Earls court Methodist Church. Once a week there was a good-sized audience of housewives eager to learn from an expert. Two women were assigned to each gas-ring and all who participated in each lesson were invited to take their share of the cooked food home with them later.

It was through Miss Ryley's interest that one of our Department Managers, Col. Louis Keene, C.O. of the Lorne Scots Regiment, put through an important scheme to improve the quality of the meals for troops in training during the Second War. He had observed that the Army food list was very nearly a relic of the Crimean War, and the cooks were generally soldiers assigned to a type of work

totally unfamiliar to them. He described the situation to Miss Ryley, she and I talked it over and decided we should try to do something about it. She herself set up and contributed generously to a fund for the initial organization, and after obtaining the services of Miss Elspeth Middleton, dietitian and excellent teacher, a one-year demonstration course for Army cooks was under way at Brampton, Ont. Soon Col. Keene was receiving requests from many directions for help in training men in the culinary art. One message from Camp Borden read, "We are sending you two salesmen and three house-painters. Turn them into cooks."

One of Miss Ryley's great friends and close associates was Kathleen Jeffs, head of Eaton's Montreal restaurant service. It was a matter of pride for both of us when Dr. Fred Tisdall, special adviser on health and nutrition to the R.C.A.F., came to us to ask for Miss Jeffs for the important new role of Chief Messing Officer of the Air Force. As I had seen what had been happening to various businessmen who had volunteered as "dollar-a-year" experts in Ottawa, I did some cross-examining before I could be completely persuaded to approve Miss Jeffs' release for the duration. I asked, "To whom will Miss Jeffs be responsible?" Dr. Tisdall said, "To the Chief of the Department, R.C.A.F. There will be only one officer between Miss Jeffs and the Government." Once satisfied that she would not be side-tracked or sacrificed, I called our President and got his approval for the plan, but I still had one more question in my mind. "Will Miss Jeffs be considered on the same level as male officers in the Forces?" I asked, referring by that to the payment of full salary by Eaton's during her term of service, and with her position held open for her return. To which, Mr. R. Y. Eaton replied without hesitation, "Most certainly!"

Chief Messing Officer Kathleen Jeffs left a brilliant record in a hitherto untried territory. At a postwar banquet given in her honour by the dietitians in Toronto, the ovation which greeted her just before the unveiling of her



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